

Letters

MDJ December 12, 1995

Phagan change 'despicable'

DEAR EDITOR:

Bill Kinney's "Around Town" column Dec. 2 told of a change made in the wording on a historical marker near the grave of Mary Phagan in the Marietta City Cemetery. Censored from the original marker was reference to the dubious "pardon" given Leo Frank in 1986 for the rape and murder of Ms. Phagan. He was convicted of the crime in 1913, and the conviction was upheld three times by Georgia's Supreme Court and twice by the U.S. Supreme Court.

The Phagan family was never notified that a change in wording on the historical marker was being sought or made. They learned of it while on a cemetery-cleaning visit.

Kinney explained: "The inscription change was made by the Parks and Tourism Committee chaired by Councilman Dan Cox. Members are Betty Hunter and Philip Goldstein ... Cox admitted the committee yielded to 'political pressure' by Goldstein and the Jewish community." And the Marietta City Council went along without a formal vote and the press absent.

The *MDJ* is to be commended for exposing this insensitive, conniving, deplorable action. The Jewish community should not conspire and manipulate to change history to suit its wishes. Jewish leaders should denounce this contrived deed and urge that the original wording on the historical marker be restored.

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